

REMARKS

Claims 1-7 are pending. Claims 4-7 have been withdrawn from consideration. Claims 1 and 3 have been amended herein. Support for the amendments is at least found at paragraphs [0023]-[0029] and Figs. 1-3.

Applicants' undersigned representative thanks Examiner Ruddock for the courtesies extended during the telephone interview of September 22, 2009. Applicants' separate record of the substance of the Interview is incorporated in the remarks below.

Applicants' Response to the Claim Rejection under 35 U.S.C. §112

Claim 3 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Applicants have clarified the claim language by including the element that the interlayer-strength technique is applied to a portion a predetermined distance from an end portion of the impact-absorbing composite structure so as to have the feature of claim 3. Specifically, as discussed during the Interview with reference to Fig. 3 of the specification, when a destructive force F is applied the impact is sustained as represented by Fig. 3 to prevent an impact absorbing ability of the structure from deteriorating. See also paragraph [0029] of the specification.

Applicants' Response to the Claim Rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 1-3 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Kitano et al. (US 2002/0179390).

In response thereto, applicants respectfully submit that the claims as now presented are not anticipated by Kitano for at least the reason that Kitano does not disclose each and every feature of the claims either expressly or inherently.

Specifically, Kitano does not provide for an interlayer-strength improvement technique which is applied on the impact-absorbing composite structure in an oblique manner or in a gradual manner with respect to an impact orientation.

As discussed during the interview, one possible embodiment of the invention as expressed in Figs. 2A-2B, illustrates that a force F is applied to the impact-absorbing composite structure 11 along an impact orientation. The interlayer strength improvement technique (in the case of the embodiment: needling 12) is applied in an oblique manner or in a gradual manner with respect to the impact orientation. See also paragraph [0024] of the specification.

Kitano discloses that a fiber reinforced composite employs a tensile deformation mechanism to absorb impact. Additionally, the stitching in Kitano is to prevent peel off of the edge of the fiber reinforced member. See paragraph [0086]. As further discussed during the interview regarding Kitano, the reference discloses that the bands 1 are positioned so as to receive directly the applied impact. See Figs. 5 and 13.

As such, the disclosures of Kitano at least cannot provide for an interlayer-strength improvement technique applied on the impact-absorbing composite structure in an oblique manner or in a gradual manner with respect to an impact orientation.

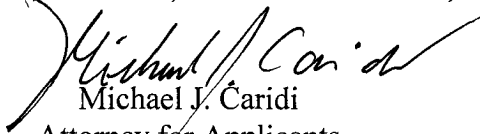
In view of the aforementioned amendments and accompanying remarks, as well as the Interview of September 22, 2009, Applicants submit that the claims, as herein amended, are in condition for allowance. Applicants request such action at an early date.

If the Examiner believes that this application is not now in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact Applicants' undersigned attorney to arrange for an interview to expedite the disposition of this case.

If this paper is not timely filed, Applicants respectfully petition for an appropriate extension of time. The fees for such an extension or any other fees that may be due with respect to this paper may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-2866.

Respectfully submitted,

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